

Exhibit No. 7 1Date 4-7-11Bill No. HB 423

HB 423 is a huge gambling expansion bill masquerading as a social service funding bill.

Ever since the "21 in 91" campaign in 1991, the gambling industry has been nosing around here, using every trick in the book to get Montana to legalize blackjack. This bill's promise of social service funding is just a newly packaged scheme to move us from our Mom and Pop, local bar-style, Class II games into Class III Las Vegas-style, house-banked card games. Please don't fall for it.

Montana's legislature has wisely rejected every blackjack bill that has come before it. Montana law says blackjack is an "illegal gambling enterprise." Blackjack is, and has always been, prohibited along with other Class III house-banked games like craps and roulette. Montana DOES allow Class II NON-banked card games. Class II games, like poker, are played against other players and not against the house.

Line 30
The most important part of this bill is cleverly buried on page 6 (as it is posted online), in Section 5, Definition #19a. Three little words are crossed out to take blackjack and twenty-one off the list of illegal games.

These three little black marks have the power to turn Montana's friendly casinos into Vegas-style casinos, with all the fraud and crime and corruption that comes with them.

To present this as an appropriations or finance bill to help disabled, mentally ill, abused, elderly, developmentally disabled, victims of domestic violence, suicidal Montanans and those needing long-term care or foster child care [New Section 1 (2) a through h] is a fraud and an insult to the people of Montana.

The fiscal note is ridiculous. By 2015 it projects a measly \$98,838 to help all these people. It claims that more money will come from a federal match, which becomes more unlikely every day.

Where is the fiscal note on what it will cost to regulate a form and level of gambling we've never had in Montana? Where is the fiscal note on what it will cost in new social services, bankruptcies, welfare and expanded law enforcement and prison space as required by a notoriously corrupt industry?

Please follow the lead of every Montana legislature before you, and kill this bill now.

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